Legislative Professionalism Component Scores, 1973-2014*

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Description

Dataset contains measures of legislative professionalism components over the time period of study. Each component is measured separately by biennium and is presented in detail in Bowen and Greene (2014). We measure legislative expenditures, legislator salary, and session length (both regular and special sessions) from the 1973/4 biennium to the 2013/14 biennium (off-year election states run from 1974/5 to 2012/13). Dataset also includes 1st and 2nd dimension professionalism scores created through multidimensional scaling, as explained in Bowen and Greene (2014).

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Codebook

Variable	Description
`state`	State name
`stateabv`	State abbreviation
`fips`	State FIPS code
`year`	Last year of biennium
`sessid`	Numeric code for biennium *Note:* takes same value regardless of on-year/off-year elections
`expend`	Expenditures per legislator in thousands of 2010 dollars *Source:* U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Survey of State Government Finances http://www.census.gov/govs/state/ *Note:* Data were created by subtracting the total amount paid in salary (# of state legislators * salary or (per diem * session length)) and then dividing by the number of legislators.
`salary_real`	Legislator compensation, in 2010 dollars *Source*: Book of the States, various years. Typically Table 3.9 "Legislative Compensation: Regular Sessions" *Notes*: Only regular session salary included in totals. Salary is annual salary and/or per diem salary multiplied by length of regular session. Other forms of compensation (vouchered and unvouchered per diems for living expenses, housing allowances, health care benefits, etc) are not included.
`t_slength`	Total length of session (regular and special sessions) *Source*: Book of the States, various years. Typically Tables 3.19 and 3.20 "Bill and Resolution Introductions and Enactments: Regular and Special Sessions" *Notes*: Measured in legislative days. For session lengths coded in calendar days we follow Squire (1992) and multiple by 5/7. In a few cases, we deviate from this strategy by using information from state legislative websites, legislative journals and minutes, and communications with state legislative clerks. See section on "Updates in V1.1" below.
`slength`	Length of regular session *Source*: Book of the States, various years. Typically Table 3.19 "Bill and Resolution Introductions and Enactments: Regular Sessions" *Notes*: Measured in legislative days. For session lengths coded in calendar days we follow Squire (1992) and multiple by 5/7. In a few cases, we deviate from this strategy by using information from state legislative websites, legislative journals and minutes, and communications with state legislative clerks. See section on "Updates in V1.1" below.
`mds1`	Multidimensional scaling (MDS) predicted value, first dimension *Source*: Calculated by authors. See Bowen and Greene (2014) for description.
`mds2`	Multidimensional scaling (MDS) predicted value, second dimension *Source*: Calculated by authors. See Bowen and Greene (2014) for description.

Miscellaneous Usage Notes

Constant dollars: All dollar amounts are in constant 2010 dollars. This deviates very slightly from what is shown in Bowen and Greene (2014). There, dollar amounts are in 2009/2010 dollars.

Missing data: Several states are missing data on the length of sessions, particularly during the mid-1990s. When possible, we use formal start and stop dates to count the calendar days and then convert to legislative days by multiplying by 5/7. Still, there are many years in which the Book of the States simply does not contain enough information to code session length. We have left these values as missing in the dataset. However, we believe that, depending on the usage of the data, scholars may want to impute these missing values based the length of sessions from previous bienniums. For states with per diem salaries, missing data on the session length variables also result in missing data on compensation and expenditures.

Off-year elections: Five states in our data hold (or have held) state legislative elections on odd years: New Jersey, Mississippi, Virginia, Louisiana, and Kentucky (prior to 1984). For these states, bienniums are coded as beginning in the even year. The first observation for these states is thus the 1974-5 session rather than the 1973-4 session.

Kentucky switched from off-year to on-year elections in 1984. Kentucky did not have a regular session in 1985 but did have a special session. We double-count the 1985 special session, first as part of KY's 1984/5 off-year session and then as part of the on-year 1985/6 session. We believe this is a better representation of the state's level of professionalism, but such a coding strategy may not be appropriate for all uses of the data.

Updates in V1.1.1

V1.1.1 includes the following changes over V1.1:

- Corrected expenditure data: the expenditures per legislator component is measured as legislative expenditures minus the amount spent on legislative salaries. However, in previous releases, legislative salaries were measured in current, rather than real, dollars. This is been corrected to the appropriate real dollar measure.
- Salaries in state-sessions with per diems are capped to per diem limits if the state has such limits in that session.
- These changes resulted in reduced salary and expenditures in a handful of states, particularly in the 1970s (where current dollars differ the most from real dollars). Each variable in V1.1.1 is correlated with its previous V1.1 version at $r > .99$.

Updates in V1.1

The new version extends the Legislative Professionalism Component Scores dataset to the 2013/14 biennium (on-year election states) or the 2012/13 biennium (off-year election states). The update also includes improved measures of session length for states with missing data in the Book of the States or states with inconsistent reporting of session length to the Book of the States when session length data could be identified from state legislative websites. Major changes are outlined below and listed by state.

New Jersey: Updated session length data for NJ were provided from a phone conversation with a staffer at Office of Legislative Services on June 15, 2016. Selected years from the Book of the States either had incomplete data or reported calendar days instead of legislative days during the past decade.

Component scores in the V1.1 use the following data, whichever is higher of the Senate or Assembly totals plus the joint session days. Both quorum and session days are included.

year	sen quorum	sen session	assembly quorum	assembly session	joint session
2003	12	15	16	15	2
2004	16	15	30	14	2
2005	16	16	17	12	2
2008	21	12	20	11	3
2013	19	20	18	15	2
2014	18	22	24	17	2

Massachusetts: Dates are provided from daily House and Senate Journals, posted online at MA legislatures website (Clerk pages), dating back until the 1999 session. Include both formal and informal session days. House data are incomplete in 2001 session and not available in 2000 or 1999. Component scores use these data from 1999-2014, except for 2010-2013, when the Book of the States has non-missing values for MA coded in legislative days.

year	senate	house
1999	123	
2000	130	
2001	123	
2002	124	127
2003	130	125
2004	125	136
2005	129	133
2006	138	133
2007	123	137
2008	139	152
2009	138	150
2010	129	136
2011	125	136
2012	131	135
2013	127	134
2014	129	139

Michigan: the website for the Michigan Legislature (www.legislature.mi.gov) includes links to House and Senate journals. Each legislative day receives its own number in the Journal. 1995-1996 session is missing online, and no earlier sessions are currently available.

year	senate	house
1997	94	97
2008	95	96
2011	101	104
2012	83	84
2013	104	108
2014	87	88

Pennsylvania: PA legislative website includes links to records of activity on all session days dating back to 1969 regular session. See http://www.legis.state.pa.us/SessionDays.cfm?Chamber=H. Session days were counted for the House and Senate for the following years to fill in missing data (97-99, 2004) and replace calendar days with legislative days (2013). In 2007/2008, the book of the States lists PA has having a combined 355L term, which is replaced with the values below in our scores. In addition, special session values for 2007 and 2008 are: 29 H, 24 S (2007) and 57 H, 31 S (2008).

year	senate	house
1997	64	66
1998	48	55
1999	59	61
2004	68	76
2007	96	115
2008	66	69
2013	75	81

References

Bowen, Daniel C. and Zachary Greene. 2014. "Should We Measure Professionalism with an Index? A Note on Theory and Practice in State Legislative Professionalism Research." *State Politics & Policy Quarterly* 14(3):277–296.

Squire, Peverill. 1992. "Legislative Professionalization and Membership Diversity in State Legislatures." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 17(1):69–79.